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ABSTRACT

The object of this module is to increase teachers' understanding of the function of role model play in their students' development and to aid teachers in identifying the types of role models that can open options for students. A four-step process is presented for teachers to use in facilitating their students' identification with nontraditional role models. An excerpt from a book on understanding the behavior, motives, and thoughts of children is provided. Handouts for workshop activities are included as well as a booklet for teachers to use with their students in classroom activities. (JD)

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TEACHER SKILL GUIDE FOR COMBATTING SEXISM

Module #12

Helping Students Identify with Role Models

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SP 016 018

TEACHER SKILL GUIDE FOR COMBATTING SEXISM

Module # 12

Helping Students
Identify with Role Models

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MODULE #12: HELPING STUDENTS IDENTIFY WITH ROLE MODELS

OBJECTIVES

*To increase participants' understanding of the function role models play in their students' development

*To help participants identify the types of role models that can open options for students

*To present participants with a four-step process for facilitating their students' identification with nontraditional role models

SUGGESTED TIMING

	Activity	Suggested Time
I.	Introduction	5 minutes
II.	Exploring personal role models	50 minutes
III.	A four-step process for focusing on role model identification in the classroom	70 minutes

WORKSHOP DESIGN

Activity I. Introduction

Objective

*To introduce the topic of nontraditional role models

A. To the leader:

1. Present a brief lecture such as the following:

"Children learn many of their behaviors by watching and imitating the adults who serve as their role models. Parents, of course, can serve this modeling function, especially when a child is very young. However, even if a child's parents often behave in nonstereotyped ways, there are so many other sources of social conditioning that the child is still likely to develop stereotypic notions about appropriate female behaviors and appropriate male behavior.

"As teachers, we all have a potent socializing effect on our students. Therefore, our classroom efforts to provide nonstereotypic role models are essential if we want our students to develop beyond the limits of traditional sex-role stereotypes. Also, as already emphasized in this course, we need to help our students build the internal support systems that will allow them to function nonstereotypically even beyond the relative protection of the classroom society. To this end, we have already explored the use of several techniques (e.g., role playing, self-statements) that can help students recognize the components of nonsexist behavior patterns and then develop within themselves component behaviors, thoughts, and feelings.

"Today and in the next workshop, to continue building toward our course objectives, I will be introducing two additional approaches.

The first one involves supplying students with appropriate, nonstereotypic role models and facilitating the process of student identification with such models. The second technique involves the use of guided daydreams, a very powerful educational and therapeutic technique."

Activity II. Exploring personal role models

Objective

*To allow participants to explore the dynamics of how role models function in their own lives

A. To the leader:

1. Present a brief introduction to this activity"

"By examining our own lives, we can probably understand everything we need to know about the dynamics of how role models influence a person's development. Therefore, let's begin today's activities by thinking about role models in out own lives.

"To this end, we will focus on several questions. Then, we will be sharing our thoughts in small groups. Finally, we will discuss what we've learned as a total group."

2. Ask individual participants to consider the following questions, spending several minutes thinking about each one and noting their answers in writing:
   a. At present, do you have any role models?
   b. Have you ever consciously sought a role model at sometime in your development? (E.g., a housewife who was thinking of returning to work after several years out of the job market very actively sought women who could serve as role models for her during this period of transition. That is, she was seeking out women who were, in her eyes, successful both as housewives and professionals.)
   c. Who were the important role models in your past development?
   d. Were there any role models missing for you in the past--models you regret not having been able to find?
   e. Are there any role models you are looking for now and hoping to find in the future?
3. In groups of four or five, have participants share their responses to the focus questions.
4. Have participants convene in one large group.
5. Summarize, in lecture form, the dynamics of role model identification, touching upon the following points:
   a. The kinds of role models we look for will vary as our needs change.
   b. Sometimes we all need role models who can shake up our patterns of thinking and show us that alternatives exist.
   c. Sometimes we need role models to emulate (i.e., inspirational models) and other times we need role models to imitate (i.e., in terms of specific behaviors, qualities, etc.).
6. Allow time for participants to share any new insights or to ask clarifying questions about the process of role model indentification.

Activity III. A four-step process for focusing on role model identification in the classroom

Objective

*To present a four-step process whereby teachers can work on the issues of role model identification in their classrooms

A. To the leader:
   1. Present a brief outline of the four-step process that will follow:
      a. Identification of the types of nontraditional models students need
      b. Identification of the potential role models who exemplify these types
      c. Identification of the qualities that make role models acceptable to students
      d. Developing strategies to facilitate the process of student identification with appropriate role models; insuring that students do not automatically reject potentially helpful role models.

B. Identification of the types of nontraditional models students need
   1. Have each participant work alone.
      a. Referring to the list of "Components of a Nonsexist Person" (see Module #6), ask individuals to think about the types of role models their students need in order to help internalize each component.
      b. Participants may find themselves identifying specific people who exemplify these types of role models. They should note these examples for use in the next step of this process.
   2. Ask participants to share their ideas in small groups by grade level or subject area.

C. Identification of potential role models who exemplify nontraditional types
   1. Instruct participants to focus on this question: "Who are the specific people who exemplify the types of nontraditonal role models you think your students need?" These examples might come from real life, from literature, from television or film, etc.
   2. With this focus in mind, give participants time to generate examples, using a variety of materials (such as nonsexist books, biographies of outstanding women, current magazines, etc.).
   3. Ask participants to form same grade level groups of three or four people and to share their insights.

D. Identification of the qualities that make role models accepable to students
   1. Ask participants to spend time, by themselves, generating a written list of criteria to answer this question: "What qualities are most likely to make a potential role model acceptable to your students?
   2. Have participants convene in one large group. Ask for volunteers to share their ideas.
   3. Present a brief lecture, emphasizing these points:
      a. Role models are most acceptable to students if they are shown to have some sort of power or status.
      b. Role models are most acceptable to students if they are not perceived as rejecting some value which is central to the student's own value system.

E. Developing strategies to facilitate student identification

1. Present a brief lecture, such as the following:

"When we deal with the issues surrounding student identification with appropriate role models, we are usually faced with two problems. I will discuss these two problem areas, and then ask you to participate in a series of activities designed to resolve them in the classroom setting.

"First of all, in order to facilitate role model identification, we are faced with the need to supply students with more information about the models than is usually readily available to us. Traditionally, role models were used for the purpose of presenting students with job alternatives for their future consideration. For example, students are exposed to women and men, often from minority groups, who work in nontraditional occupations. The information presented to students in relation to such models is limited: it centers upon the obvious fact that the model has chosen to pursue an unusual occupation. Of course, for our purposes in this course, such models can serve an important function. But by now, we have all tried to go far beyond this single faceted approach in our classrooms. We want students to recognize, accept, and live in nontraditional, nonsexist, nonstereotyped ways. Therefore, it is important to present students with more than one dimension of a potential role model's life style. I would like you to be able to show your students what nontraditional role models do, as well as how they feel, how they behave, what their attitudes are, what their values are, and how they support themselves psychologically through difficult situations.

"A second problem we face is the possibility that our students may reject potentially valuable role models, thereby eliminating any chance of successful identification with the life styles they exemplify. There are three reasons that might be at the root of a student's rejection of a potential role model. First of all, students may perceive a potential role model as too unlike themselves to be acceptable: that is, too much richer, or smarter, or more talented, or too different because of sex, nationality, race, etc. Secondly, students may reject potential models who are seen as exceptions to the general rule, exemplifying a set of unusual characteristics that the students believe unattainable in their own lives (e.g., 'Sure, Madame Curie was a very successful scientist--but she was a genius!'). Finally, for one reason or another, students may simply reject potential models as undesirable: incomplete in some way, or rejecting of some value that is of central importance to the student.

"There are some strategies that can help reduce the possibility that our students will reject valuable role models. Remember that our goal is to help facilitate student identification with the role models we present to them. Identification is a matter of degree, and can vary from simple imitation ('Yeah, if he could do that, I guess I can too, because we're not that different.') to emulation of a model's habits, values, attitudes, and style of living.

"I want you to participate in three exercises which model classroom approaches to minimizing rejection possibilities. You probably won't be able to use the exercises exactly as presented; rather, use them as starting places for thinking about what you will need to do in order to help your own students identify with the role models you present to them."

2. Expanding the image of a current role model
   a. Explain to participants:
      "Sometimes, students have already formed strong identification patterns with models from, for example, professional sports or the media. However, they may be identifying with model characteristics that are not particularly valuable in terms of movement toward behavior free of sex bias. One strategy for classroom work on identification is to start with such a model, expand your students' image of the person, and help them to see that the model possesses a variety of non-stereotyped traits that you would like them to perceive and value."
   b. Distribute and review Handout I, "Expanding the Image of a Current Role Model" (page 7).
3. Nontraditional pictures: three examples
   a. Explain to participants:
      "Sometimes, you can use pictures of people who are behaving in nontraditional ways as a stimulus to classroom discussions, helping your students to think about imitating the pictured models. Of course, the specific pictures you select will depend on your students' age level and the types of models you think your students need, but the examples we present here can serve to illustrate the processes involved."
   b. Distribute and review handouts:
      1) Handout II, "Females in Nontraditional Jobs" (page 8).
      2) Handout III, "Males in Nontraditional Jobs" (page 9).
      3) Handout IV, "Males in Nurturing Roles" (pages 10).
4. Personalizing a role model
   a. Explain to participants:
      "This activity is an example of an approach that can help your students identify with a valuable, well-known role model by thinking about all the qualities, characteristics, and past experience that they might have in common with the model. That is, this approach helps your students view a role model's success as attainable, by personally identifying with as many of the model's individual characteristics as possible."
   b. Distribute and review Handout V, "Personalizing a Role Model" (page 11).

F. Brief theoretical lecture
1. Present a brief lecture, such as the following:
   "Jerome Kagan, in Understanding Children* provides a theoretical backdrop for classroom efforts designed to increase student identification with role models so as to develop role flexibility and the thoughts and feelings of a liberated person. According to his view, the greater the obvious external similarity between student and model, the stronger the students' expectations that they can gain the less tangible psychological qualities they value--the model's power, magnetism, attractiveness and competence. The desire for such qualities motivates students to imitate the model's behaviors and assume the model's values and motives.

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*See Background Reading, page 13.

"Thus, by providing students with role models who exemplify nonstereotyped behavior, and by deliberately strengthening student identification with these role models, we can provide another internal support for student growth and change.

"Kagan describes the natural process of identification as having four parts*:

a. The child perceives her- or himself as similar to the model. The more characteristics the child sees as similar and the more distinctive those characteristics, the greater the identification.

b. The child shares in the model's emotions. That is, the child reacts emotionally to events involving the model, as if s/he were also taking part.

c. The child desires the model's attractive attributes. The model's attractiveness depends on potency, ability, and humanity.

d. The child tries to adopt the model's beliefs, values, and behaviors. The child believes that in taking on tangible behaviors and values of the model, s/he will develop the less tangible psychological characteristics of the model as well.

2. Indicate that the four-step classroom process presented in this module is based on the steps in Kagan's conception of the natural process of identification.

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*Adapted from Understanding Children: Behaviors, Motives, and Thoughts, by Jerome Kagan. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971. Used by permission.

Module #12: Handout I

EXPANDING THE IMAGE OF A CURRENT ROLE MODEL

Objective:

*To encourage students to expand their image of a current role model, learning to value traits they may not yet perceive

Role Model:

"The Fonz" (Henry Winkler), a tough guy character from the popular TV show, "Happy Days"

Process:

1. Have your students find out as much as they can about the actor who plays the part of "The Fonz," stressing that the TV character is only a role and does not present a true image of the real actor. Ask such questions as:
   a. What is Henry Winkler's background?
   b. What kind of professional training has he had?
   c. Is he a tough guy in real life?
   d. What other TV roles has he played?
   e. How does he feel about classical music (literature, art, etc.)?
2. Have your students present minirole plays, in the style of "The Fonz" but incorporating their expanded image of Henry Winkler as a real person:
   a. In the manner of "The Fonz," pretend you are Henry Winkler giving a lecture to a group of eighth grade boys about all the reasons they should take dance and drama lessons in school.
   b. In the manner of "The Fonz," pretend you are Henry Winkler and act out a scene that demonstrates some nonsexist component behaviors.

Note:

The process remains the same no matter which popular character you (or your students) choose to work with: simply have your students learn as much as possible about the real person and them encourage them to identify with newly discovered, valuable traits.

Module #12: Handout II

NONTRADITIONAL PICTURES: EXAMPLE #1
Females in Nontraditional Jobs

Objectives:

*To expand the number and range of jobs your female students perceive as available to them
*To encourage an attitude of acceptance, among all students, of females who work in nontraditional jobs
*To raise the aspiration level of female students by presenting picture models of female professionals

Role Model:

Present picture(s) of women who are engaged in nontraditional jobs. Pictures can be cut out of magazines, etc., by you or your students; or they can be collected from curriculum packages that deal specifically with this issue.

Process:

1. Present, for example, a picture of a woman who is a constrution worker.
2. Focus a discussion with your students on such questions as:
   a. What are all the ways in which you think you might be like this woman? (Encourage speculation.)
   b. Do you think that you might like to try this particular job? What capabilities do you possess that might make you successful in it?
   c. If you were to try this particular job, what might you like about it?
   d. Why do you think this woman is a construction worker? How would you feel about her if she was your mother?
   e. What do you think a girl or boy might say to people who laughed when they heard that the child's mother is a construction worker?

Note:

The process remains the same no matter what particular occupation is pictured: simply show your students a picture of a woman in a nontraditional job and get a discussion going about their personal reactions to it. Be prepared for some negative reactions. Prod students to explore and express their reasons for feeling negative about a woman in a nontraditional role.

Module #12: Handout III

NONTRADITIONAL PICTURES: EXAMPLE #2
Males in Nontraditional Jobs

Objectives:

*To expand the number and range of jobs your male students perceive as available to them
*To encourage an attitude of acceptance, among all students, of males who work in nontraditional jobs

Role Model:

Present picture(s) of men who are engaged in nontraditional jobs. Pictures can be cut out of magazines, etc., by you or your students; or they can be gathered from curriculum packages that deal specifically with this issue.

Process:

1. Present, for example, a picture of man who is working as a telephone operator.
2. Focus a discussion with your students on such questions as:
   a. Why do you think that this man is a telephone operator? What are some of the better aspects of this job?
   b. How would you feel if your father worked as a telephone operator?
   c. If before he took his job as an operator, the man in the picture felt worried that some people would think it was a strange job for him, what might he have said to himself that made him take the job anyway?
   d. What do you think a girl or boy might say to people who laughed when they heard that the child's father works as a telephone operator?

Note:

The process remains the same no matter what particular occupation is pictured: simply show your students a picture of a man in a nontraditional job and get a discussion going about their personal reactions to it. Be prepared for some negative reactions. Prod students to explore and express their reasons for feeling negative about a man in a nontraditional role.

Module #12: Handout IV

NONTRADITIONAL PICTURES: EXAMPLE #3
Males in Nurturing Roles

Objective:

To encourage an attitude of acceptance, among all students, of males in nurturing or child care roles

Role Model:

Present picture(s) of men who are engaged in some type of direct nurturing activity. Pictures can be cut out of magazines, etc., by you or your students; or they can be gathered from curriculum packages that deal specifically with this issue.

Process:

1. Present, for example, a picture of a man who is playing with a group of children in a park.
2. Set the scene: "This man's little girl is having a birthday party with her friends in the park. The man is taking care of the children at the party because he and his wife have decided to take turns running their daughter's birthday parties from year to year."
3. Focus a discussion with your students on questions such as:
   a. What do you think the father and the children will do at this party?
   b. How do you think the man feels about his little girl?
   c. How do you think he feels about running the party?
   d. Do you think it's fair that he and his wife take turns running their daughter's parties?
   e. If you get married and have children, what things do you think you and your spouse will take turns doing?
4. At the end of the discussion, make this point: "Incidentally, it is getting to be much more common for mothers and fathers to share the responsibilities of being parents instead of having the mother take most of the responsibility on her own. Do you think it ever happens in your family?"

Note:

The process remains the same no matter what the scene is in the particular picture you present: simply show your students a picture of a man in a nurturing role, devise a scene to fit the picture, and get a discussion going about your students' reactions.

Module #12: Handout V

PERSONALIZING A ROLE MODEL

Objective:

*To facilitate the process of student identification with an appropriate role model by encouraging students to perceive and identify with as many individual model characteristics as possible

Role Model:

Billie Jean King is an excellent role model in that she represents success for women in a field of endeavor--professional sports--that was traditionally male dominated. Prior to Ms. King's success, women did not earn as much in sports as men did, because it was assumed that they were not competitively equal to men. However, Ms. King refused to accept such second class status: she worked hard, and as a result there is greater financial equity between women and men who play professional tennis, and women are more accepted in the world of sports.

Process:

1. Have your students learn as much as they can about Billie Jean King (from books, TV, sports magazines, etc.).
2. Focus a discussion, with your students, around such questions as:
   a. When Billie Jean King refused to accept second class status as a tennis player, which nonsexist component behavior(s) do you think she was exhibiting?
   b. From what you know about Billie Jean King, what other nonsexist component behavior(s) does she exhibit?
   c. When Billie Jean King began to work for more equitable pay for female tennis players, what do you think some of her fears might have been? What do you think she might have said to herself in order to get over her fears and make her efforts successful?
   d. What else do you know about Billie Jean King (e.g., nationality, the part of the country where she grew up, the kind of family she comes from, her likes and dislikes as a young girl--any information, past or current)?
   e. What do you have in common with Billie Jean King (background, common experiences, interests, values, etc.)?
   f. Can you foresee a time in the future when Billie Jean King might be a good role model for you?
   g. Think about other women who have fought against accepting second class status: women who have done this in small ways or large ways, women whom you know personally or whom you've heard or read about. Tell us about some of these women. In what ways do you think you might be like these women?

Note:

The process remains the same no matter which role model you discuss: simply encourage your students to perceive successful models as people with a variety of traits, many of which are likely to be part of any student's own personal experience.

BACKGROUND READING

IDENTIFICATION [1]

A six-year-old boy feels good when he hears a visitor congratulate his father on a promotion or overhears a neighbor comment on his father's youthful vigor. A five-year-old girl feels shame when she learns that her mother has deserted the family, has attempted suicide, and is now in a mental hospital. In each of these examples, the child's emotions seem more appropriate to the parent than to the child. However, the child acts as though he were the parent. The proud six-year-old boy feels as if he, and not his father, had been congratulated; the five-year-old girl suffers as if she, and not her mother, had been hospitalized for the attempted suicide. This phenomenon of vicarious sharing in the emotional states of those to whom one feels similar is called *identification*.

Why should the child feel emotions that are in actuality appropriate to someone else? Identification stems from the child's belief that some of the attributes of another person, or model, belong to him. The model can be a parent, a sibling, a relative, a friend, or a fictional character. A boy who realizes that he and his father have the same name and the same bright red hair and is told by all his relatives that he and his father have warm, hearty laughs comes to believe that he is similar in a fundamental way to that parent. When this belief in physical and psychological similarity permits the child to experience emotions appropriate to the father, the child is said to have established an identification with him.

How Identification Is Established and Strengthened. Children do not develop strong identifications with everyone to whom they feel similar. Moreover, they can develop identifications with more than one model. Four related processes are involved in the establishment and strengthening of an identification.

Process 1: The perception of similarity to a model. Every child believes that he shares physical or psychological characteristics

*From Jerome Kagan, Understanding Children: Behavior, Motives, and Thought, pages 12-18, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971. Reprinted with their permission.

with some other person. The greater the number of characteristics believed to be shared and the more distinctive those characteristics, the firmer the child's belief that he is similar to the model. Thus perceived similarity in unusual attributes contributes in a major way to the establishment of an identification. If a characteristic is possessed by everyone, like two eyes or five fingers, the child does not attribute much importance to it. If the shared attribute is relatively uncommon, like freckles or bright red hair, the child is likely to invest it with much value.

There are three ways in which the child can amplify the belief that he is similar to a model. In the first and most primitive mechanism, he recognizes that he and the model have certain features in common. In the case of the father, the boy knows that they have the same last name and perhaps the same first name. He also notes that they have the same sexual anatomy, are upset by the same irritating events, or have the same facial birthmark. The child also awards enormous value to the blood relationship between his parents and himself, since this is unique to his family. A second way in which the child develops a belief in similarity to a model is through the active adoption, often by imitation, of the model's behavior, opinions, and dress. A young girl may adopt her mother's moral values, her taste in clothes, or her interactive style with the father and in so doing will strengthen her presumption of similarity to her mother. Finally, the child's belief in his similarity to a model is strengthened by those adults who tell him that he is similar to the model.

In most cases, all three mechanisms lead the child inevitably to the conclusion that he is more similar to his same-sex biological parent than to any other adult he knows. Hence boys usually develop the strongest identifications with their fathers and girls identify most strongly with their mothers.

Process 2: The experience of vicarious affect. Whenever a child experiences an emotion that is appropriate to the model, the child is said to be sharing vicariously in the affective state of the model. A girl who enjoys seeing her father kiss her mother or a boy who becomes excited by seeing his father's name in the newspaper is experiencing vicarious affect. ***An identification exists between a child and a model whenever the child believes that he is similar to the model and shares in the model's emotions.*** In effect, the child seems to believe that events that occur to the model also occur to

him. This process leads the child to believe that people will react to him as he thinks they react to the model.

Process 3: The desire for the model's attractive attributes. The young child is sure that most adults, especially his parents, are physically stronger, more competent, and wiser than he is and have greater freedom of choice and opportunities for pleasure than are available to him. The child wants these attractive privileges for himself. He wants to be smarter and stronger than he is; he wants to be able to dominate others, to resist coercion, to decide where he will sleep and when he will eat. The child is also attracted to the model's physical ability and skills. He wants to be able to lift heavy objects, drive a car, swim in deep water, and operate a power mower. Finally, the child is attracted to a model whom he perceives as kind and affectionate toward others. Thus the attractiveness of the model is based on his potency, ability, and humanity.

Process 4: Imitation of the model. The child tries to adopt the beliefs, values, and behaviors of the model because he believes that by increasing their similarity he will be able to gain some of the model's less tangible psychological attributes, such as power, popularity, and skill. The child seems to assume that if two people are alike on external traits, they must also share similar psychological attributes. The greater the obvious external similarity between child and model, the stronger the child's expectation that he will be able to gain the less tangible psychological qualities he values—the model's power, affection, attractiveness, and competence. The desire for these qualities motivates the child to imitate the model's behaviors and assume his values and motives.

A young man recalls his childhood feelings for his father:

> My admiration for him transcended everything. I always wanted to work with my hands on machinery, to drive big trucks, to fix things like he did. I didn't really like spinach but I never lost the image of his bathtub filled with it, and up to a few years ago I always ate it—it was good for me and would make me strong, like him. (Goethals and Klos, p. 44.)

Interrelationship of the processes. The relationships among these four processes form the basis for two important principles. First, the child who believes that he is similar to another person is likely to experience vicarious emotions appropriate to that model.

These two conditions, as we have seen, define identification. Second, the child tries to adopt the model's attributes in order to increase the similarity between them and to gain more of the model's desirable characteristics. The more successfully he imitates the model, the stronger his belief in their similarity becomes and the more likely he is to experience vicarious emotions. Thus the desire for the model's attributes and imitation of the model strengthen identification. Every time the child imitates the model, by adopting an action or taking on an attitude, his belief in their essential similarity becomes firmer and it becomes easier for him to share vicariously in the model's successes.

In general, the more desirable the model's attributes, the greater the likelihood that the child will strive to become like the model. Since the adoption of the model's characteristics increases perceived similarity, the child will experience even more intense vicarious emotions. If this cycle of increased similarity and vicarious emotion continues for many years, the child may become so closely bound to the model that he will believe that a part of himself is permanently invested in the admired person.

Identification and Deviant Development. The fact that the child develops beliefs, motives, and behaviors that reflect dominant cultural values is easier to explain than the fact that he adopts beliefs or actions that *deviate from the norm*. We can explain normative behaviors without resorting to the concept of identification. The child sits in school, runs in the playground, and talks at the lunch table, behaviors that are appropriate in these contexts and not necessarily based on identification. Similarly, the act of making the bed each morning is usually based on a desire to avoid parental criticism rather than on an identification with a parent. Most of the behaviors the child displays each day are either habitual reactions to a particular setting or actions motivated by a wish to attain a reward, avoid punishment, or master a culturally valued skill. However, these mechanisms will not explain why a five-year-old whose parents praise obedience and punish disobedience is rebellious; why a ten-year-old who has been told that his father deserted the family shows a sudden loss of motivation in school; or why a thirty-five-year-old woman whose mother became schizophrenic at age thirty-six becomes anxious and insomniac, as if she believed that she too were about to go insane. These actions are appropriate to no particular context; nor do they bring joy and postpone pain. Rather, they flow

from beliefs about one's fundamental attributes that were established through identification with a model.

Development of the Self-Concept. Identification not only has a profound influence on behavior; it also plays an important role in the development of the ambiguous process of self-definition, often called the *self-concept*. The child's self-concept consists in part of his evaluation of the degree to which his attributes match those that the culture regards as good. The valued attributes in our culture include, among others, warmth, sincerity, honesty, strength, size, physical attractiveness, intelligence, autonomy, sexual potency, wealth, power, and a capacity to enjoy life. The child's sense of the degree to which he possesses these "good" attributes is determined in part by his social experiences. For instance, his evaluation of his power or strength is based to some extent on his ability to defeat a rival in a game or fight, to resist pressure, and to dominate others. But the child is also prone to regard himself positively or negatively on the basis of his identification with various models. A boy who has identified with a handsome father regards himself as more attractive; a girl who has identified with a courageous mother feels bolder.

A negative view of the self is established if the child identifies with a model who possesses undesirable attributes. Most five-year-olds, confronted with the fact that they are more similar to their same-sex parent than to any other adult (because they share the same surname, body build, genitals, and certain unique features), will develop a minimal identification with that parent. This identification occurs regardless of how undesirable or unattractive the parent may be, for it is impossible to believe one shares nothing with biological parents. To be of the same "flesh and blood" as another is to possess an unalterable bond of shared identity. As the child begins to recognize the negative qualities of the parental model, he comes to believe that some of these qualities must be inherent in his personality.

A basic determinant of serious mental disorder is the belief that one shares similarities with a parent who has bad traits. This belief leads the child or adult to conclude that he too is hateful, mean, aggressive, disturbed, weak, irresponsible, unintelligent, unpopular, or incapable of expressing warmth and affection. Many unhappy adults feel unworthy, incompetent or undesirable because they believe they are fundamentally similar to a parent with these traits. A schizophrenic woman does not want to feel she is as cold, hateful, or

selfish as her mother, but the identification that occurred twenty years earlier cannot be denied.

The average child identifies first with his parents, for they are the adults whom he knows best and whom he first respects and admires. As he grows older, he evaluates his parents' power and competence in perspective, for he meets and hears about other adults with qualities that surpass those of his parents. He reads about great athletes, astronauts, and scientists. The powerful motivation required to work on a scientific discovery or a novel is often based on an identification with a relevant model, and the commitment to the work is an attempt to maximize similarity to that model. The child is more likely to believe he can command power and glory if someone of his own sex, ethnic, religious, or racial group has done so in the past. These bases for perceived similarity often catalyze attempts to "be like" the model.

In the current civil-rights struggle, black leaders recognize that the young black child has difficulty perceiving similarity to white adults and therefore of establishing an identification with white heroes and white culture. The black child must be exposed to attractive black models if he is to develop a firm concept of himself and an expectation that he too can assume roles of extraordinary power, creativity, and humanity. The movement to celebrate the beauty of blackness and to place talented black adults in positions of power and responsibility should have a beneficial effect on the black child's attitudes toward his own competence and worthiness. It is also reasonable to assume that many black children will benefit from being taught by black teachers. Other things equal, the black child is more likely to identify with a black model than a white model and to strive to adopt the model's values. Thus, if intellectual competence is one of the teacher's values, the average black child will be more quickly persuaded of the validity of that ideal by a black teacher.

This last recommendation is but one instance of a more general principle. All teachers are potential models, and their power to sculpt values is underestimated. The early school years have an important propaganda function. The teacher must persuade the child of the joy, beauty, and potential utility of knowledge that does not seem to be of immediate relevance. The typical second grader does not agree with this idea. The teacher's most potent weapon of persuasion is herself. If she is seen as human, competent, and just—the major attributes of a heroine—the child will award to the tasks she assigns the same reverence he assigns to her. As one first grader with such a teacher remarked, "Mrs. Stokes is such a nice person. She even got me to like numbers." The hiring of teachers is too often based on credentials having little to do with the potential to act as an effective model. It is easier to assess professional competence than humanity. But both administrators and teachers should bear in mind that the teacher, especially in the primary grades, is first a model and then a dispenser of knowledge.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: A BOOKLET FOR PARTICIPANTS
TO USE WITH THEIR STUDENTS

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SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENT

Complete all of the activities in Section I.
Section II and Section III are optional.

SECTION I: STRENGTHENING STUDENT IDENTIFICATION WITH NONTRADITIONAL ROLE MODELS

Overview

Present a nontraditional role model from real life, literature, history, the media, etc., and sharpen student awareness of the model's specific characteristics including:

a. Physical, demographic, or social characteristics which make the model similar to the students;
b. The model's thoughts, feelings and behaviors, particularly those that might be common to students' experience;
c. The model's attributes, particularly those that the student might want to emulate and develop.

After presenting such details about a nontraditional role model, the natural process of identification might occur among your students. If, however, they dismiss the model as unattainable or as an historical accident or exception to society's rules, you will need to take further steps to facilitate student identification with the role model.

Help your students become aware of ways in which they are similar to the role model (e.g., physical and psychological characteristics, skills, likes and dislikes, life facts such as place of birth, number of siblings, etc.).

Help your students share in the model's emotions, guiding them to empathize with the model's feelings in various situations.

Build admiration and respect for the role model, increasing the model's desirability by highlighting how the model's attributes earn power, love, self-satisfaction, integrity, or whatever.

Finally, have your students focus on specific aspects of the role model that they want to develop; then reinforce those characteristics in the students.

Classroom Activity #1: Selecting role models who exemplify role flexibility and the various specific components of a nonsexist person.

*In history, in literature, and in real life today, there are people who exemplify the nonsexist characteristics that we want our students to develop. Gather information about such people, if they are accessible only through books, TV, the media, movies, etc. Otherwise, you might be able to give students firsthand contact with some live role models.

*As you try to identify possible role models, be sure to think about people you encounter in your usual course readings as well as people who have achieved in your field. For instance, a history teacher might want to provide female role models in history class. The teacher might highlight the role of Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman in American and black history; also, the teacher might make students aware of topnotch black historians who are productive today, such as Zora Hobson. In an English class, the teacher might identify role models (past and present) in literature: writers, poets, etc., who share certain characteristics with the student and who exemplify some characteristics that students will hopefully develop.

*As a teacher, you can identify appropriate role models. You can also have students search for role models on their own. This can be of great benefit to your students in terms of personal involvement in the process.

Classroom Activity #2: Sharpening student awareness of the role model's attributes

*Focus discussions about role models on such questions as:

1. What is the person like in physical appearance?
   In habits? In interests?
   In inner thoughts? In feelings?
   In talents and skills?
2. What is her or his role in her or his family?
   In her or his community?
3. What are her or his nagging problems?
   Hopes and goals?
   Values?
   Opinions and attitudes?
4. Describe a typical day: situations, events the person has faced or experienced.

*Provide similar questions to guide students' library research.
*Gather information about role models by viewing films and TV programs, having classroom speakers, etc.
*Have students interview live models.

Classroom Activity #3: Helping students recognize similarities between themselves and role models

Through discussions, interviews between pairs of students, and worksheets, have students consider ways in which they are similar to the role model presented. Remember: the more similarities and distinctive characteristics students identify, the greater the likelihood that they will identify with the model.

*How are you like _____? What are all the ways in which you are similar to _____?
*Following is a list of all the characteristics of _____. Check off all those that are also true of you. Tally and share results.
*Highlight certain specific characteristics of the role model. Then, have students try to convince you (or one another) that they too have shown evidence of those characteristics.
*Ask students to compare their parent(s) to the role model. They might find this easier than comparing themselves to the model. You can them make the point that when the students reach their parents' ages, they too might have developed the highlighted characteristics.
*Run a sharing circle: "I am like _____ in this way..." Repeat this many times.
*Point out to students how you think they are like the model.

Classroom Activity #4: Helping students to share in the model's emotions

Students might dismiss a model as being too different from themselves if they believe that their own emotions would be very different from the model's in the face of specific situations and experiences. For instance, if a certain model can face a large crowd and deliver a very effective speech with poise and confidence, students might reject this model, imagining themselves frightened and self-conscious in the same situation. To help them experience emotions similar to those of the model, you might:

*Have students discuss any situations in which they experienced the same feelings as the model.
*Have students role play situations as if they were the role model.
*Have students write or talk as if they were the inner voice of the role model in a particular situation.

Classroom Activity #5. Helping students admire and respect the role model

*Through composition or discussion have students focus on the model's finest qualities and how they might lead to valued ends (like love, power, influence, achievement).
*Have students make a case for the model as a great human being by holding a debate, making fan magazines, etc.
*Have students write a eulogy for the role model if the person is no longer alive.

Classroom Activity #6:

Have students focus on specific characteristics of the role model that they would like to develop in themselves; reinforce these characteristics when adopted by students.

*Be sure to reinforce your students: "I noticed that you did (describe the behavior). You're like (name of role model)." "You and (role model) are two of a kind. You're both (key characteristic)."
*Have students monitor themselves and each other, noting the times in their day (week, month) when they exhibited any characteristic similar to a role model's that they choose to emulate.
*Encourage students to see that a model's characteristics are not foreign to their family: by interviewing parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, etc. for ways the family members exemplify the characteristics. ("If it's in your family, it's very likely that you can develop it, too.")

SECTION II: DEVELOPING IDENTIFICATION WITH LIVE AND ACCESSIBLE ROLE MODELS

Overview

When appropriate to a class and subject, live role models can provide the most exciting and powerful focus for the process of identification. Everyone knows people who exemplify certain characteristics of a liberated person, if they look hard enough.

Have students search their own experience, their families, their friends, their parents' friends, their teachers, and their local community acquaintances for models of role flexibility.

After they've identified such a person, have students conduct an interview that reveals substantial information about the person and gives the student the firsthand contact that should accelerate the process of identification (see Appendix One, page 25).

Or, as an alternative, have students move through this sequence:

1. Choose a nontraditional role model.
2. Ask to interview the model about her/his success at being nonstereotyped and liberated in some regard.
3. Tell her/him which of his/her attributes you view as nonstereotyped and liberated.
4. Ask how s/he feels about those attributes.
5. Ask her/him to talk about the struggles and the challenges to achieve those attributes.
6. Ask her/him to find some way to encourage you to develop those attributes and to help you believe that you too can develop them.
7. Thank her/him heartily.

SECTION III: TEACHER SHARING

Overview

You, as a teacher, might exemplify and share a constructive instance of identification with a role model from your own life. For instance, if your students seem to be attracted to developing a particular nonstereotyped characteristic for which you have had a role model in your own life, seize the opportunity to share your own identification process.

Wendy Gollub offers an example from her own life, one that she might share if she were exploring with students the challenge of developing leadership ability:

"When I was student teaching Newton, Massachusetts, I was assigned to a little school whose principal was Hope Danielson. I had been told that this woman was terrific--competent, warm, caring, an educational leader (not just an administrator), and a woman people respected for her leadership. Within a few weeks of being at the school, it was obvious to me that Hope was exceptional. I found myself preoccupied with where Hope was, what she was doing, what people thought of her, how she handled incidents and problems. She seemed to be levelheaded in times of trouble, caring and feeling in the midst of other peoples' emotional crises, supportive of people, including me,

and extremely strong and authoritative in her actions and decisions. She wasn't perfect, but she was a humanistic and respected leader. I remember thinking she was just an historical accident. Imagine such a fantastic person: a woman who really exemplified my image of a great leader, approachable, focused and inspirational all at the same time. Surely, I couldn't be like her! But then, I sometimes measured myself against her. Wasn't I, too, a rather gentle and caring person? Couldn't I, too, be levelheaded when the going got tough? Wasn't I also a female with all the socialization patterns that Hope must have gone through? I was interested in a great number of the same educational issues that intrigued Hope. She and I had a mutual friend. . . Really, I did have some things in common with her! And I began to entertain the possibility that if I watched her, and behaved as she did in certain situations, maybe I could experience a tidbit of success? I have noticed, since then, many situations in which I've done what she would have done, perceived people and issues the way she did, While I may never be as effective a leader as Hope, I can see ways I've been motivated and energized by her example."

Using this kind of input from your experience, students may be motivated to discuss some of the models they've identified with during their lives. Recalling such experiences can help students identify with new nontraditional mdoels.

APPENDIX ONE

INTERVIEWING A ROLE MODEL[1]

As we work to develop in ourselves the skills, attitudes, awarenesses, and feelings that enable us to be nonstereotyped and liberated people, I'd like each of you to conduct an interview with someone you view as nonstereotyped and liberated, and whom you admire deeply. Think carefully and choose someone whom you genuinely admire for her or his success in thinking, feeling and behaving in liberated ways. For instance, the person you choose might be extremely successful at treating males and females with equal attention and respect. Or, the person might have developed the capacity to express and feel a wide range of emotions. Or, the person might have developed, in some depth, certain specific skills that go beyond traditional sex-role socialization. Make sure that the person you choose has your genuine admiration. It might be someone in your family, a friend, a parent's friend, a teacher, or anyone with whom you have had personal contact.

Ask the person for an interview. Tell her/him that you have a homework assignment to talk with someone you really respect for reflecting the traits of a nonstereotyped, liberated person. Be prepared for some resistance from the person, such as, "Who me?" or "You have the wrong impression of me." If you encounter such resistance, try these alternatives:

a. Stress the fact that this interview is a favor to you, that you need to do it for a class, and that it doesn't have to be shared with others.
b. Assure the person that you realize that nobody is 100% nonstereotyped and liberated, and that it's just a relative thing.
c. If the person resists admitting success in being nonstereotyped and liberated, by prepared with specifics that describe her/his success as you have seen it.

Clarify why you think this person is relatively nonstereotyped and liberated, highlighting the specific things you've noticed about her or him that you admire. (E.g., "I've seen you tell at mom without fearing that you'd lose her affection; I've seen you cry with sadness and frustration and show happiness and affection for others; I've seen you think clearly in the midst of very stressful situations; I've seen you hang in with an obstinate person until you get what you want without being made to feel guilty or awkward; all in all, you show a capacity to feel many feelings in a day and age when most people have blocks against expressing a wide range of emotions," etc.)

After you've summarized what you've noticed, and focused on some successful aspect of the person, say that you want to interview them about their characteristics in other areas and also their history of success in the area you highlighted. Ask questions about the person's background: where they came from, the schools they've attended, their families, their early interests, their memories. Ask about times in their lives that they think contributed to their success in the area you chose to highlight: "How did you get that way? What are early examples from your life?" Ask about the person's thoughts, feelings and behaviors concerning their success. Ask if the person saw the same

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[1]Adapt this to a level appropriate to your students.

qualities in others while growing up; did the person admire such qualities and determine to develop them? Ask for examples from the present that reflect the person's ability to exhibit the strength you highlighted: "Recently, have you been aware of being this way: Give me some examples, please. How did you feel in these situations? What did you think to yourself and about yourself?"

After you feel that you've talked enough with the person you're interviewing, see if the two of you can summarize your discussion by filling in the following sentences:

I acknowledge that I am successful at _____.

Some life experiences that have contributed to this success are _____

_____.

Some personal qualities that contribute to this success are _____

_____.

I value being this way very much because _____

_____.

When I've successfully shown this characteristic in a specific

situation I usually feel _____.

And I usually think to myself _____

_____.

I think other people should develop this characteristic because _____

_____.